

50,000,000 ferns are gathered annually. These have a local value of something over \$20,000. . . . A good picker will gather 10,000 to 12,000 ferns daily." It is stated: "Over 50 carloads of ferns have been sent this season from Bennington County to refrigerator headquarters in Pittsfield, Mass. Two carloads are sent from Bennington village each day." Mr. Winslow was not prepared to say whether the collecting of the fronds of ferns would seriously injure the plants, if it was done in the latter part of summer, and if proper care was used for separating the fronds from the crown; and asks that some Vermont reader in position to observe the methods and conditions under which this industry is being carried on report to the JOURNAL.

This review of the available evidence seems to show that the ferns which are used commercially are bearing up well under the strain of annual pickings. This is indeed encouraging, both from the point of view of the fern-lover and that of the industry. But it may be partly due to the abundance of the species in question and to the chance that the same plant may not lose all its fronds every year, even with pretty thorough picking. It is to be hoped that some one with the opportunity to do so will take kindly to Mr. Winslow's suggestion and make accurate observations of the real effect of commercial picking.

HUDSON FALLS, N. Y.

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MONOMORPHISM IN *EQUISETUM TELMATEIA* EHRH.— This typically dimorphic species, which is the most abundant representative of the genus in Western Oregon, occasionally shows a tendency toward monomorphism, possibly indicating a reversion to a primitive type in which fertile spikes were borne on branching green stems. Ordinarily the pale-brown unbranched

fertile plants appear very early, and are followed some weeks later by the branching green sterile plants; but not infrequently along with the latter are found individuals with whorls of green branches, but bearing a fruiting cone at the apex. Three specimens of this sort were collected during a walk of less than a mile along the tracks of the Oregon Electric Railway between Orville and East Independence in Marion County, Oregon, on May 3 of the present year. All of them were growing in very dry gravel between the rails. On June 18, about a hundred similar plants were found in finely crushed rock ballast of the Southern Pacific tracks near Divide Station, Lane County—again, in a situation of unusual dryness. The typical form seems to prefer a low, moist habitat. This difference in habitat gives rise to the conjecture that the variation may be due to a deficiency of moisture and absence of shade.

A similar specimen sent the writer by Professor J. K. Henry from Vancouver, B. C., is determined by him as the variety *frondescens* A. Br. I have not seen the type-specimen, but it is a question whether such forms should be recognized as forming a true variety, or merely as teratological "sports" like four-leaved Trilliums. The cones seem to be normally developed, and the green branches fully as long as in the ordinary sterile plants.

A fourth specimen collected on May 3 shows a whorl of branches at each of the four lower nodes, a fully developed fruiting cone at the fifth node (about 18 cm. above the base) and a continuation of the stem with at least four more whorls *above* the cone.<sup>1</sup> All these specimens will be deposited in the herbarium of the Fern Society, and it would be interesting to know if this tendency to monomorphism has been observed by other collectors either in this country or in Europe.—J. C. NELSON, *Salem, Oregon.*

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<sup>1</sup> This specimen appears in the middle of the group of plants represented in Plate 5.



BRANCHED FRUITING STEMS OF *EQUISETUM TELMATEIA*  
Photograph by L. S. Hopkins of specimens collected by J. C. Nelson